

400. THE ACQUISITION OF ADULT RESOURCES

401. INTRODUCTION

National Scout Associations depend on adult leadership to deliver their youth programme to young people. If that programme is to be effective it is clear that the adults in charge of its delivery must be carefully selected, assigned to roles that are most appropriate for them and then trained and supported in the job. They must be encouraged to pursue their commitment to Scouting enthusiastically and sensibly, and should be invited to review their success on a regular basis.

Based on this, the system should also be flexible enough to allow each individual, at the conclusion of a term of office to move across the board, not just 'upwards'. Such reassignments to a new job will constitute a new challenge and therefore contribute to sustaining an adult's commitment to the Movement.

Adults in Scouting have the right to expect that their National Scout Association will value the contribution that they are making to young people and to the organisation, and provide them with all of the training, support and resources that will be necessary if they are to meet the association's expectations.

The key areas in the acquisition of adult resources will be introduced one by one and each of them will be explained in detail. It is important that they are adapted to suit local situations.

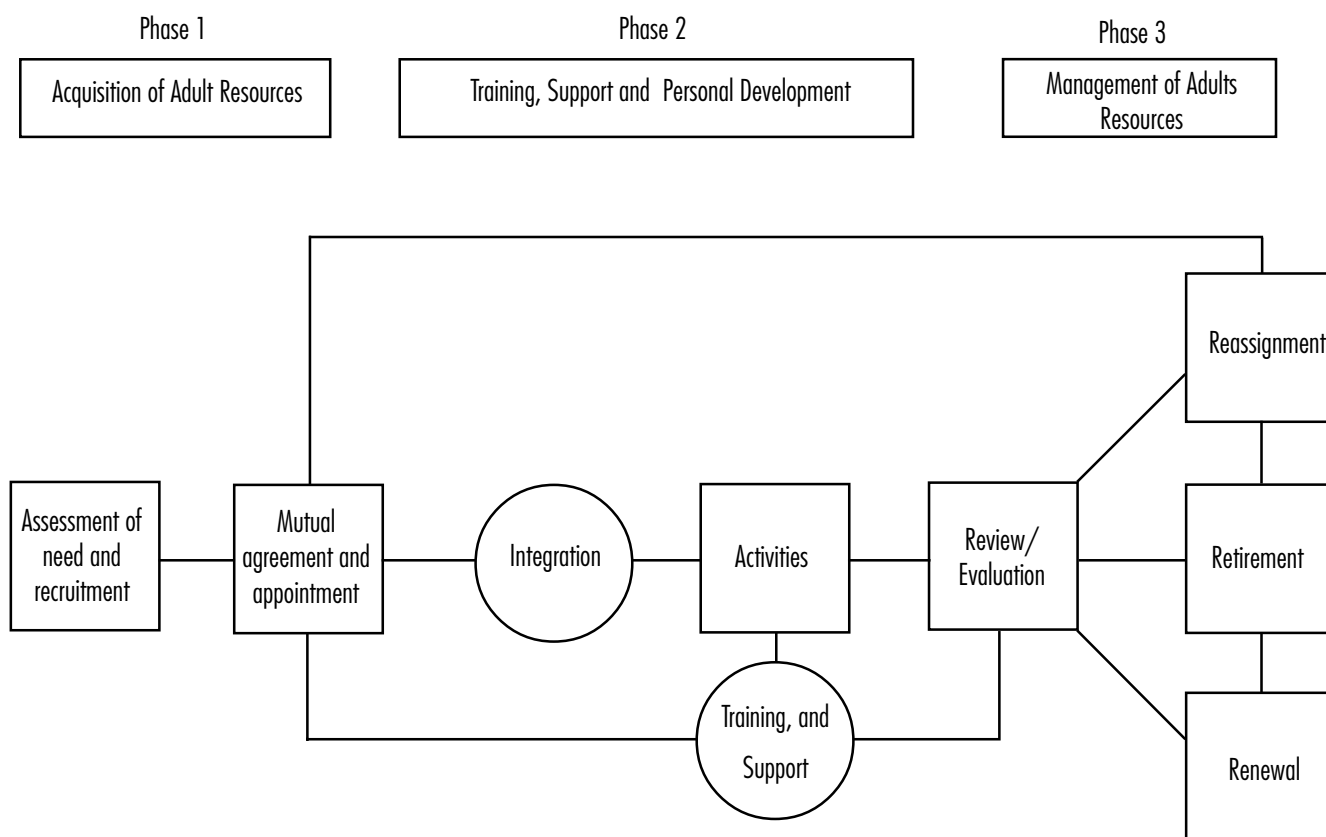


Figure 401.1: The Life Cycle of an Adult in Scouting

402. ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

402.1 JOB DESCRIPTION Introduction

In a voluntary organisation there is a danger that their responsibilities will not be clear to them. This may happen due to a casual approach to recruitment or due to reluctance by the organisation to impose formal obligations on volunteers. Ultimately this is likely to lead to confusion and/or to people trying to perform jobs from which they are not suited. It is imperative therefore, for the organisation to list down all the tasks to be performed to achieve the stated goals and objectives. In other words, the Job description is based on the needs of the organisation and it serves as the first part in the process. What then is a Job description?

What “Job description (JD) is a written statement of what the person actually does, how he or she does it and under what conditions the job is performed (Dessler”, 1991). This information is in turn used to write a job profile or specification, which lists the knowledge, abilities and skills needed to perform the job satisfactory

Where Where do we start? JD commences at phase I of the World Adult Resources Policy, well before the process of appointing and contracting leaders. We need to be clear, in our minds, as to what the job/task entails in term of its nature, responsibility and the expected levels of performance. Having done that, the next step involves listing down the requirements for the job. That is what kind of knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications does a person needs to have to do the job well. Bear in mind that certain jobs require statutory professional certification.

Who Who writes the JD? Indeed there is no hard and fast rule. Generally, however, the person accountable for the job assumes responsibility for writing the JD. For examle, the State/Area Commissioner will write the JD for his/her District Commissioners (DC) since he/she knows best what job he/she wants the DC to perform.

How does a JD format look like? While there is no standard format, most descriptions contain the following.

Job Title: _____ State/Area: _____

District: _____

Work performed: (Numbered list of specific duties and responsibilities)

Organisational Relationships: (Short Statement about chain of command)

Working conditions/physical environment: (List any special working conditions involved on the job)

Qualifications: (Educational requirements, certification or licensing standards, experiences and basic knowledge requirements).

Written by: _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Ambiguous

To run unit meetings
To raise funds regularly for the Association

Behavioral

To run 3 unit meetings in a month
To raise \$20,000 for the Association over a period of 8 months

GUIDELINES

Be clear

JD should list the work to be carried out clearly. This will avoid misinterpretation of expectations and will help the person to stay focussed on his/her duties.

Be specific

State the job objectives in precise, behavioral and where appropriate, quantifiable terms. This will help the person to understand exactly what constitutes a satisfactory performance and can therefore judge how well he or she is performing. Here are two examples, illustrating the differences between an ambiguous and a behavioral job objective:

402.2 SELECTION CRITERIA

Re-check

Finally re-check whether the JD fulfils the basic requirements. Ask yourself: Will the new person understand it if he/she reads the JD?

Conclusion

On a final note, it is particularly important to periodically review the JD perhaps on a yearly basis, so that the content remains valid and reflects the current situation or anticipated future. Only then will the JD be a useful document for aiding people to do their best and not merely something that is nice to have, but of no significant value.

Three key questions need to be asked:

- Can this person do the job?
- Will this person do the job?
- Will this person fit in with the team?

The selection criteria for a particular job should be carefully set down in writing, well in advance of the interview. The local committee should not be constrained by the job description, and the actual selection criteria might include some or all of the following matters:

- Previous qualifications and training
- Understanding Scouting
- Youth Leadership experience
- Previous Scouting experience
- Personal abilities
- Motivation

In preparing the selection criteria, be realistic – it is not helpful when the standards set are too high or too low. There is a natural tendency to want to set high standards and to aim to ensure that every leader is a super leader. Few can realistically meet such high aspirations. Unfortunately there is sometimes another tendency, to believe that it is better to put anybody into a job than see it empty and see a Unit remain without leaders.

402.3 APPOINTING AND RETIRING

It has been said that the most important decisions any manager ever makes are who to appoint and who to retire. The need to get the right people, in the right jobs and to ensure the removal of those who are not achieving what the Association needs, should also be central concerns in Scouting. The responsibility for hiring and firing will usually be shared between adult leaders at various levels.

402.4 SELECTION INTERVIEWS

Recruitment is often best carried out by a 'committee', not an individual and, as mentioned earlier, it is based on the needs of the Association. First, an 'appointment committee' cannot be suspected of favoritism or nepotism as the case may arise. Second, it may be in a better position, since it comprises several people, to consider more than one angle and third a committee of several may be in a better position to keep an appointment than an individual person will usually be.

The acquisition of a new leader is at the same time a cause for celebration and a reason to exercise great care and diligence. On the one hand the association demands a constant and regular flow of adults who will make a commitment - short or long term - to its youth members and therefore to its very future. The association carries a major obligation to ensure that a very stringent selection criteria is satisfied before new applicants are given access to leadership positions in Scouting, and then to provide excellent training and support to enable them to fulfil their potential in the delivery of high quality Scouting.

For these reason, the processes apply to selection, as well as the training and other support extended to a new leader need to be clear and strenuous. Conducting an interview is important, both to make sure that as much practical information as possible is obtained, and to ensure that the seriousness and significance of the process are demonstrated symbolically.

It is worth considering what needs to happen before, during, and after the interview and the following suggestions are intended to assist those in charge of doing the best and most professional job of which they are capable.

402.5 BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

The choice of location and surroundings, the manner in which the appointment is made and the time available are all-important signals to the interviewee.

- Arrange the appointment at a time that suits both the interviewer and the interviewee and ensure that enough time is available.
- Choose a location that is comfortable, neither too hot nor too cold. The room should have adequate light and ventilation and should enable the interview to proceed without distraction or interruption.
- Decide whether the interview will be a 'chat circle' affair or an 'across the table' event. The choice of format is important and each carries its own message. There is a place for both types of physical set up. In deciding which one is right for your next interview, you need to consider the purpose, likely duration, experience of feed back from any earlier interviews with this person and any other factors which might be relevant.

Before the interview the committee must prepare itself by:

- Contacting referees;
- Ensuring each committee member re-reads the job description;
- Reviewing/Defining the selection criteria to be applied;
- Ensuring every member has reviewed any material provided by or about the person to be interviewed;
- Making notes on matters that need to be clarified;
- Deciding on the areas to be covered by each interviewing member (Interviewers).

402.6 DURING THE INTERVIEW

Make the applicant feel at ease, introduce the members of the recruitment committee, offer refreshment if appropriate, engage in light conversation to help the interviewee to feel at ease.

Outline what the purpose of the interview is and how it will proceed. Then the interview should proceed using suitable questioning techniques and offering clear information as appropriate, supplemented by written material where possible. Every member of the recruitment committee should ensure that he or she makes suitable notes as the interview proceeds to prepare the discussion that will take place later.

402.7 AFTER THE INTERVIEW

There is always a temptation to avoid the work associated with concluding an interview process. Delays are unfair to the individuals concerned, and to the Units that are depending on the process. Therefore move quickly but thoughtfully to complete the process.

A recruited adult, who brings to the association a range of competencies relevant to his/her role, will be at least part way to meeting the selection criteria. He or she needs to be able to demonstrate the competencies in a Scouting context.

403. RECRUITMENT

As mentioned earlier, adult leadership determines to a very large extent the success or failure of the Movement. In order to obtain the adult resources it requires, an Association can choose one of several strategies.

- Wait for individuals to come forward of their own free will to offer their services.
- Convey information, in the hope that once better informed, some people will come and join the Association.
- Actively recruit the most suitable individuals for specific positions. They may be active members of the Association, former members, supporters, parents, young people or people who have nothing to do with the Movement whatsoever.

Many Associations adopt the first strategy, because they believe that a voluntary organisation should not recruit people but should only use people when they decide to come, of their own free will.

The second option is just a variant of the first and only the third actually constitutes a recruitment effort and reflects the will to procure the resources that the Association needs, having first established an inventory.

Research also indicates that in many societies today people will not “volunteer” without being directly asked. Therefore, if we are serious about increasing the adults involved in Scouting, we need a strategy which uses this method. The approach suggested below can be used to recruit Leaders and Commissioners to Scouting but can also be used to recruit to “support” roles such as chairmen, treasurers, fundraisers and administrators.

403.1 SEEKING LEADERS

This is not a one-person job; it should always be the responsibility of a small team that we could call the ‘recruitment committee’, its task will be to:

Define responsibility

People should be recruited in answer to a clearly identified need and for specific tasks. It is therefore necessary to start by establishing a job description. This description should clearly define the nature of the job, the tasks to be accomplished, the scope of responsibility, and the working method. It enables the most suitable person for the job to be identified and the objectives to be achieved within a specific time frame. It will give the candidate clear indications that will enable him/her to commit him/herself voluntarily and consciously, as well as clear guidelines concerning the expected results. Responsibilities of the Association in supporting the new member should also be clearly outlined. It is important that all people interacting with the recruitment are aware of their responsibilities and have the capacity to provide support.

Establish the ideal profile

Having drawn up a job description that provides details of the mission, responsibilities, tasks, time to be devoted etc., the recruitment committee can establish the ideal profile of the person they are seeking.

This requires determining the essential and desirable qualities, skills and abilities of a person who will do the job/task effectively. There is no guarantee, however, that the perfect candidate can be found. This approach allows us to:

- Compare candidates;
- Measure the discrepancies between the ideal profile and the actual profile;
- Decide on the best candidate available.

Establish a list of people to contact

It is essential that only suitable adult applicants are appointed in the Movement. Recruitment committees can be appointed to consider all adult applicants wishing to take an appointment in Scouting. This committee would support the local Commissioner who has responsibility for Scouting in that area. The committee would plan an important role to ensure adults wishing to join the Movement uphold the fundamentals of Scouting and are suitable role models.

A documented recruitment process must be in place that should be followed by the Recruitment Committee. This should include:

- Personal disclosure of any criminal convictions. There is specific legislation in some areas that mandate this.
- Referee checks from people/organisation who can provide information on the suitability for the job.

Sources for potential leaders could include: parents, older youth members, school teachers, members of police force, bank officers, members of army, navy, air force, tradepeople, and former Scouts in the local area.

Make contact

Having drawn up a job description and ideal profile, the committee will need to meet each of them individually. This is best done by making an appointment to meet the person on his/her home ground. Don't forget that you are in fact the applicant, since you are seeking to obtain support. During this meeting, it is important to show:

- How and why you have chosen that person.
- How and why you believe that he/she is the best choice for the job.

- How the post you are proposing can meet his/her needs and desires (belonging to a group, being involved in the community, feeling useful, creating new social links, making the most of one's abilities, training, playing a recognised role etc.).

It is important to present the position in the most attractive way possible and to avoid frightening the candidate by using jargon, making exaggerated demands or suggesting anything that could give the candidate the impression that being involved in the Movement will be a burden and a source of bother.

It is important that the candidate wants to join the Movement and to voluntarily become involved with you in an educational activity.

If the candidate agrees, welcome him/her and outline the support that will be provided. Ensure this support is then available. An important aspect is the opportunity to interact in a number of different areas before formally applying for a specific leadership role to ensure the leader is suited to that area.

If the candidate declines to accept the invitation to join, then revisit the short list and approach the next individual, following the same procedure.

In short, for a voluntary movement, recruitment means persuading men and women to join voluntarily, of their own free will.

404. MUTUAL AGREEMENT

A 'mutual agreement' needs to be established between the Association and a new leader at the time of entry. The mutual agreement defines the relationship between the parties and recognises that both parties are accepting certain responsibilities. The mutual agreement consists of a completed application for appointment, and a signed document setting out the rights and responsibilities of both parties. After the completion of suitability checks conducted according to local rules and regulations, the mutual agreement leads to appointment and membership of a National Scout Association.

404.1 AREAS COVERED IN THE MUTUAL AGREEMENT

The mutual agreement will cover all-important matters that relate to the applicant's acceptance as an adult in Scouting. It consists of a completed application for appointment and details of the Association's commitment to provide for example:

- A defined organisational framework in which to operate;
- Consideration of individual needs in appointment;
- A variety of leadership roles in a team environment;
- A personal development process that recognises existing skills and leads to enhanced personal and functional competencies;
- The opportunity to contribute to the personal development of young people;
- Appreciation and recognition of individual contribution;
- Advice and access to training activity and materials to carry out the task;
- Insurance for actions consistent with the policies of the Association;
- Opportunities for friendship and fellowship;
- Opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities.

The Adult on his/her side will agree:

- To adhere to the Policies and Rules of the Association;
- To live by the Scout Promise and Law and work to achieve the Aim, Principle and Method of Scouting;
- To accept the responsibility of working with young people;
- To actively participate in the training and personal development process provided by the association;
- To represent and promote the Scout Movement in the community.

- To acknowledge that teamwork is essential to Scouting and requires active co-operation with others and respect for their views and values.

The mutual agreement should be discussed between the adult and the Association Leader at the time of interview. The person in charge and the applicant will then sign the document and after completion of suitability checks, the mutual agreement will lead to appointment and membership of the Association.

405 APPOINTMENT

Having found a candidate who accepts its proposal, the recruitment committee has completed its task. Other people, according to the Association's rules and regulations, will now finalise the appointment.

Indeed, in most cases, those who recruit are not those who appoint. The internal rules and regulations of a majority of associations establish precisely who is responsible for appointing a candidate for a specific position at local, regional or national level, the registration process for an appointment and, if applicable, the form to fill in. An appointment is a commitment for a specific length of time (maybe three years) for a specific task; it is a mutual agreement between two parties, namely the Association and the member.

By means of the mutual agreement, the candidate will confirm his/her personal decision to carry out an educational responsibility within the Scout Association.

(Details on the 'mutual agreement', what it should contain and the process of concluding it are developed in section 404. Please refer to this section.)

REFERENCE

Dessler, G. (1991) **Personnel/Human Resource Management** (5 ed.) Englewood CliffNJ: Practice.Hall.District: